

## Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method of entering formatted electronic ink data provided in association with a user on a handwriting system, the method comprising the steps of:

positioning one or more pieces of writing medium to substantially overlay at least a portion of a digitizing surface associated with the handwriting system; and

physically entering handwritten data on the one or more pieces of writing medium using a stylus associated with the handwriting system such that, substantially simultaneous therewith, the electronic ink data representing the physically entered handwritten data is entered at the digitizing surface;

the one or more pieces of writing medium being configured to have a predefined format including one or more fields associated with the predefined format such that the electronic ink data entered at the digitizing surface is computer-parseable based on the one or more fields, and the one or more pieces of writing medium being further configured to permit a natural transition between the entry of electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields and entry of electronic ink data that is not associated with the one or more fields.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the pieces of writing medium has the predefined format for entry of electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields and at least one of the pieces of writing medium does not have the predefined format, such that the user may naturally transition between the two pieces of writing medium when performing formatted electronic ink data entry and unformatted electronic ink data entry, respectively.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more fields of the one or more pieces of writing medium are preprinted in watermark-type form thereon, such that the

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user may naturally transition between performing formatted electronic ink data entry and unformatted electronic ink data entry on the same piece of writing medium.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more fields of the predefined format are associated with a label.

5 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the label is associated with an information management function.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the information management function comprises at least one of an appointment recording function, a phone message recording function and a listing function of tasks to be accomplished.

10 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of the user signaling the beginning of entry of formatted electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields.

15 8. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of the user signaling completion of entry of formatted electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing the user with feedback relating to the user's entry of formatted electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields.

20 10. The method of claim 9, wherein the feedback is at least one of auditory and visible.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the feedback relates to whether or not the user is writing within one of the fields.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein the feedback relates to whether or not the user has completed one or more required fields.

5 13. The method of claim 1, wherein the handwriting system is a personal digital notepad.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more pieces of writing medium are bound together to form a pad-like grouping.

10 15. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the pieces of writing medium has a carbon paper backing.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the pieces of writing medium has an at least partially adhesive backing.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the pieces of writing medium has the predefined format on only a portion of the writing medium.

15 18. A method of entering formatted electronic ink data provided in association with a user on a handwriting system, the method comprising the steps of:

positioning one or more pieces of writing medium to substantially overlay at least a portion of a digitizing surface associated with the handwriting system;

physically entering handwritten data on the one or more pieces of writing medium using a stylus associated with the handwriting system such that, substantially

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simultaneous therewith, the electronic ink data representing the physically entered handwritten data is entered at the digitizing surface; and

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providing one or more user-specified indications in accordance with the one or more pieces of writing medium to indicate that electronic ink data entered in association with the one or more user-specified indications is to be associated with one or more fields of a predefined format, such that the electronic ink data entered in association therewith at the digitizing surface is computer-parseable based on the one or more fields, and such as to permit a natural transition between the entry of electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields and entry of electronic ink data that is not associated with the one or more fields.

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19. The method of claim 18, wherein at least one of the user-specified indications comprises at least one of a letter, a symbol and a word.

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20. The method of claim 18, wherein at least one of the user-specified indications comprises at least one handwritten stroke.

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21. The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of permitting at least one of user addition, deletion and modification of one or more fields.

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22. A handwriting system for entering formatted electronic ink data provided in association with a user, the system comprising:

a digitizing surface;

a stylus; and

one or more pieces of writing medium;

wherein the one or more pieces of writing medium are positioned to substantially overlay at least a portion of the digitizing surface such that handwritten data can be physically entered on the one or more pieces of writing medium using the stylus such

that, substantially simultaneous therewith, the electronic ink data representing the physically entered handwritten data is entered at the digitizing surface;

5 further wherein the one or more pieces of writing medium are configured to have a predefined format including one or more fields associated with the predefined format such that the electronic ink data entered at the digitizing surface is computer-parseable based on the one or more fields, and the one or more pieces of writing medium are further configured to permit a natural transition between the entry of electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields and entry of electronic ink data that is not associated with the one or more fields.

10 23. The system of claim 22, wherein at least one of the pieces of writing medium has the predefined format for entry of electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields and at least one of the pieces of writing medium does not have the predefined format, such that the user may naturally transition between the two pieces of writing medium when performing formatted electronic ink data entry and unformatted electronic ink data entry, respectively.

15 24. The system of claim 22, wherein the one or more fields of the one or more pieces of writing medium are preprinted in watermark-type form thereon, such that the user may naturally transition between performing formatted electronic ink data entry and unformatted electronic ink data entry on the same piece of writing medium.

20 25. The system of claim 22, wherein the one or more fields of the predefined format are associated with a label.

26. The system of claim 25, wherein the label is associated with an information management function.

27. The system of claim 26, wherein the information management function comprises at least one of an appointment recording function, a phone message recording function and a listing function of tasks to be accomplished.

28. The system of claim 22, wherein the system is further operative to permit the user to signal the beginning of entry of formatted electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields.

29. The system of claim 22, wherein the system is further operative to permit the user to signal completion of entry of formatted electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields.

30. The system of claim 22, wherein the system is further operative to provide the user with feedback relating to the user's entry of formatted electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields.

31. The system of claim 30, wherein the feedback is at least one of auditory and visible.

32. The system of claim 30, wherein the feedback relates to whether or not the user is writing within one of the fields.

33. The system of claim 30, wherein the feedback relates to whether or not the user has completed one or more required fields.

34. The system of claim 22, wherein the handwriting system is a personal digital notepad.

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35. The system of claim 22, wherein the one or more pieces of writing medium are bound together to form a pad-like grouping.

36. The system of claim 22, wherein at least one of the pieces of writing medium has a carbon paper backing.

5 37. The system of claim 22, wherein at least one of the pieces of writing medium has an at least partially adhesive backing.

38. The system of claim 22, wherein at least one of the pieces of writing medium has the predefined format on only a portion of the writing medium.

10 39. A handwriting system for entering formatted electronic ink data provided in association with a user, the system comprising:

a digitizing surface;

a stylus; and

one or more pieces of writing medium;

15 wherein the one or more pieces of writing medium are positioned to substantially overlay at least a portion of the digitizing surface such that handwritten data can be physically entered on the one or more pieces of writing medium using the stylus such that, substantially simultaneous therewith, the electronic ink data representing the physically entered handwritten data is entered at the digitizing surface;

20 further wherein one or more user-specified indications can be provided in accordance with the one or more pieces of writing medium to indicate that electronic ink data entered in association with the one or more user-specified indications is to be associated with one or more fields of a predefined format, such that the electronic ink data entered in association therewith at the digitizing surface is computer-parseable based on the one or more fields, and such as to permit a natural transition between the entry of

electronic ink data in accordance with the one or more fields and entry of electronic ink data that is not associated with the one or more fields.

40. The system of claim 39, wherein at least one of the user-specified indications comprises at least one of a letter, a symbol and a word.

5 41. The system of claim 39, wherein at least one of the user-specified indications comprises at least one handwritten stroke.

42. The system of claim 39, wherein the system is further operative to permit at least one of user addition, deletion and modification of one or more fields.

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